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Executive Registry
604-636

27 January 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Meeting with the President,  
27 or 28 January 1964

1. In response to your memorandum of 24 January I have reviewed the memorandum for the President on Agency public relations. I would note that the fifth paragraph on the first page could be subject to misinterpretation. You should be aware that during both Grogan's service and more recently Chretien's we have given newspapermen background information on various subjects and areas for their guidance. These are, of course, nonattributable.

I worry a bit about paragraph 7, particularly the philosophy that we can release information without any policy ax to grind as distinct from what State can do. This will be a hard one to sell. In the first place State will violently oppose it. In the second place all of our enemies in the press and elsewhere are convinced that we attempt to influence policy and will attack us vigorously in this regard. (In my opinion we must quietly work toward building the image of the Agency as a research organization, and we will have to be close to achieving this goal before we can ever attempt to get into handing out information to the press on world affairs that will be accepted without a suspicion that it is being planted for a purpose.) With this as background, needless to say I don't agree that the Agency should at this time undertake anything with attribution, as suggested in the first sentence of the last paragraph.

2. At the morning meeting on 27 January you asked for suggestions as to topics for discussion with the President, and mentioned that you planned to discuss the budget with him. You have the pertinent facts on the budget. To these I would also mention to the President some of the economy measures we are taking, and you might give him an indication that it is our earnest intention by the end of this fiscal year to drop our personnel strength to as close as possible to [redacted] which will be more than [redacted] below Agency 25X1A strength on 30 November, or approximately the time he announced his budget economy measures. Further, you can indicate that we are hopeful of effecting savings in the neighborhood of [redacted] in operating expenses. 25X1

EXCERPTED FROM THE

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But please stress that we are doing this not only in accordance with his orders, but also to achieve some operating flexibility and that if we are immediately saddled with the responsibility of settling to these levels, we lose that flexibility.

Other subjects you may wish to mention to the President would include, in my mind, such things as our Midcareer Program, the successful relocation of our [redacted] and our re-examination of all security procedures--particularly with regard to clearances.

25X1

Lyman B. Kirkpatrick  
Executive Director

LBK:drm

Distribution:

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64-2852

27 January 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: General Carter

Pursuant to your memorandum of 24 January 1964, the following comments are submitted.

1. I am much persuaded by the logic contained in the last two paragraphs of the proposed memorandum to the President concerning CIA creditable releases to the press. After 22 years as an intelligence officer, nearly 18 of which have been with CIA and its predecessor organization, my skin is becoming increasingly thin. In short, I personally would like to publicly lash out at the inaccurate and unjust criticism that has been directed toward us. However, I realize such action would be neither prudent nor practicable.

2. I am also fearful that any future attributable releases will receive, at least in the foreseeable future, the same treatment from the press as that given to our release on the Soviet economy; i.e., more copy devoted to CIA per se than that given to the content of the release.

3. CIA and its people have been and always will be news. We make headlines where almost any other Government agency would barely be mentioned, if at all.

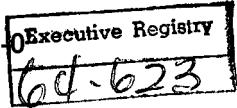
4. With all of our (the U. S.) sophistication in the sciences, the can-do, etc., in my opinion the public view toward intelligence in general, and CIA in particular, ranges from curiosity (what does CIA do with all those people and all that money) to downright revulsion. Over the years we have attempted in various ways, as pointed out in the proposed memorandum to the President, to keep the public advised (within the bounds of security) of our activities. The reaction has been mixed. Such information as we have "released" has been used by our critics against us. I believe this will continue to be true.

5. I therefore conclude that we stick with the "McCone policy of anonymity"; I recommend that a) we continue background briefing without attribution, and b) consideration be given in each case whether the content of the briefing should be cleared in advance with the White House and/or the appropriate department or agency of the Government.

[Redacted]

25X1A

J. S. Earman  
Inspector General



27 January 1964

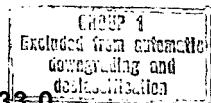
MEMORANDUM FOR THE ACTING DIRECTOR

REFERENCE: Your Memorandum of 24 January requesting my comment on Mr. McCone's Memorandum for the President relating to CIA's relations with the press

1. There is nothing in the first six short paragraphs that I find in error.
2. I cannot agree with the seventh paragraph (the one which runs over the page). In the first place, I do not believe that the credibility of statements regarding the Soviet economy would be lessened by the fact of State Department authorship. In the second place, let us not pretend that the American people regard CIA as an agency of government with no "policy ax" to grind. I find it hard to believe that Americans will accept a CIA report because they respect the Agency's objectivity, and will reject a State Department report because they know that State Department reporting is always tarnished by policy.

*I join with  
you!! In part!!*

3. I have long held the American press and the people who work for it in the very lowest esteem. An Agency such as



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EX-2  
64-6191

27 January 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR ACTING DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Public Release of Information

REF : Your Memorandum dated 24 Jan 64

1. As for the position taken in the Director's memorandum I am in substantial agreement with it. I do feel that it will always be somewhat difficult to avoid the charge that CIA is grinding a policy ax by the attributed release of information at any given time. This, however, can be somewhat mitigated by the manner of release.

2. As for the question of your taking the matter up with the President prior to the return of the DCI, my advice is to stall. In the first place the policy set forth here is the Director's own personal approach. In the second place I see no urgent requirement to get this matter settled at once, and I think the passage of some time may be helpful to everyone in gaining perspective.

[Redacted]

25X1A

R. J. SMITH  
Acting Deputy Director (Intelligence)

25X1A

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2002/07/29 14:57  
24-2851

MEMORANDUM  
CIA

25 January 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Director

SUBJECT: Draft Memorandum for the President

1. You asked for my comments on a draft memorandum for the President dated 17 January 1964 on the subject of release by the Agency of material on the Communist economies. The draft memorandum recommends that such releases be "... through CIA with attribution to that Agency."

2. I have been seeing copies of editorials in various newspapers around the country as provided by Mr. Chretien. It is my impression that the majority of these editorials criticized to some degree or other the Agency's decision to release the recent Soviet economic material with full attribution. Unfortunately, I do not still have these editorials in my office, but I should think that Mr. Chretien could easily make a statistical count indicating the pros and cons. In suggesting this, I am not advocating that our decisions be guided or controlled by the press, but public opinion inevitably has its effect on Congress and its attitudes.

3. With respect to the Congress, you are aware of what Senators Russell and Stennis said to the Director on this subject at the most recent hearing. I noted that Mr. Ostertag of the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee spoke on the floor of the House in criticism of the Agency's release of the Soviet economic material and the manner in which this can influence "policy".

4. I have only one other comment: When the Agency, as an Agency, publishes its conclusions on the state of the Soviet or some other bloc economy, it is not in a position to defend its figures in public because certain of the methods used to acquire this information is so highly classified. It rather strikes me that the Agency is the subject of enough controversy without intentionally creating additional ones, particularly when we are obliged to take the attitude, "The public has got to take our word for the figures, because we cannot tell you where or how we got them."



Richard Helms  
Deputy Director for Plans

25X1A

74-2853

24 January 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence  
SUBJECT: Memorandum for The President

1. This memorandum is for the information of the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence.
2. Unless this memorandum was solicited by the President or was written pursuant to an understanding between the President and the Director, I would not personally be in favor of submitting the annexed memorandum at this time. In the first place, I think we could use a cooling off period before taking any further initiatives which will probably result in further general discussion of the Agency's public role. In the second place, if such an initiative is considered desirable, it would seem to me better tactics to raise it in the context of some proposal for a specific release.
3. These comments apply of course to the final paragraph of the memorandum. The material in the preceding paragraphs might appropriately be made available to the President as background briefing for use in connection with any future press conferences or questions.

25X1A

25X1A

JOHN A. BROSS  
D/DCI/NIPE

64-2834

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE ACTING DIRECTOR

I am in agreement with this recommendation, particularly with the coordination set forth in the last paragraph. Also, as a vehicle we can always put out the information as a report of the Joint Economic Committee of the Congress as we did in June 1960.



LAWRENCE R. HOUSTON  
General Counsel

24 January 1964  
(DATE)

FORM NO. 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101  
1 AUG 54 WHICH MAY BE USED.

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